

SENATE JOINT RESOLUTION 412

By Atchley

A RESOLUTION to create a special joint committee to study issues relative to the confidentiality of state personnel records.

WHEREAS, Tennessee law permits any member of the public to inspect a state employee's personnel record, within certain time limitations and restrictions; and

WHEREAS, although the public certainly has a right to know about certain aspects of a person's employment history with state government, questions have arisen about the propriety of a state employee's home address, home telephone number and other personal information being available for public inspection; and

WHEREAS, many states have declared certain state employee personnel information to be a public record, (i.e. name, title, latest promotion or demotion and salary,) while classifying other more personal information as confidential; and

WHEREAS, this approach guarantees access to state personnel information that the general public legitimately has a right to know in the interests of good government (i.e., fair compensation and equitable hiring and promotion policies,) while protecting the privacy and safety of state employees; and

WHEREAS, this general assembly should take all prudent and necessary actions to balance the interests of the public's right to inspect state personnel records and state employees' right to personal privacy and safety; now, therefore,

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BE IT RESOLVED BY THE SENATE OF THE ONE-HUNDREDTH GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE STATE OF TENNESSEE, THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES CONCURRING, That there is hereby created a special joint committee to study issues relative to the confidentiality of state employee personnel records.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, That the committee shall consist of three (3) members of the House of Representatives and three (3) members of the Senate, to be appointed by the respective speakers.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, That all appropriate state agencies shall provide assistance to the special joint committee upon request of the chair.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, That all legislative members of the special joint committee who are duly elected members of the General Assembly shall remain members of such committee until the committee reports its findings and recommendations to the General Assembly.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, That the special joint committee shall be convened by the member with the most years of continuous service in the General Assembly; and at its first meeting shall elect a chair, vice-chair, and such other officers the committee deems necessary.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, That the special joint committee shall timely report its findings and recommendations, including any proposed legislation or interim reports, to the One Hundred First General Assembly no later than February 1, 1999, at which time the committee shall cease to exist.